

Letter from W. Bottomley to Alexander Graham Bell, April 19, 1878, with transcript

Copy of letter written by W. Bottomley for Sir William Thomson to Alexander Graham Bell. Folder, Thomson, drawer 6 The University, Glasgow. April 19, 1878. Dear Professor Bell:

Sir William asks me to write to you that Ladd of London was here on Monday last to see him about the Telephones you gave Sir William when he was in America. Ladd wished Sir William to lend him the Telephones but he refused and would not allow him to have them at all. While Ladd was waiting before he had seen any one except an attendant he spied the Telephones in the glass cases of the apparatus room but he was not allowed to examine them in any way.

After Sir William heard that Ladd was about he had the Telephones brought over to his own house and they are being kept here now.

Sometime ago some person was sent from a lawyers office to see Sir William with reference to what he had said about the telephone in his opening address to the Mathematical Technology of the British Association at the Glasgow meeting in 1876. Sir William was glad to be able to say he had not discribed the instrument in any way and that the instruments he had on the table at the time are altogether different from the telephones invented by you which are now in use.

Without in any way disparaging your present to him Sir William desires me to add that he wishes you to know that he made many attempts to make the instruments you gave him in America speak but without success. He put them away in his instrument case having great confidence that before long you would be able so much to improve the instrument that there would be no difficulty in using it. He was very much pleased at Plymouth last August to see the more perfect instruments you brought over you from America.

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Sir William asks me to write this now because it may be useful for you to know he considers the instruments he brought home from America were not practical instruments and he believes could not be legally considered as an anticipation of the practical instrument discribed in your patent.

With kind regards Believe me yours truly, W. Bottomley.